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SUBJECT: PRT TIKRIT: PROVINCIAL BUDGET HAS MULTIPLYING
EFFECT ON GOVERNANCE, PC HOLDS PRESS CONFERENCE

[1](#)1. (U) This is a PRT Tikrit, Salah ad Din cable.

[1](#)2. (SBU) SUMMARY. At an April 2 PRT/Coalition Forces-initiated press conference, the Salah ad Din Provincial Council (PC) Chair Sheikh Rasheed Ossman and key PC members outlined the 2007 provincial budget and fielded questions from members of the local media, including Salah ad Din Television (reftel). During the press conference, Sheikh Rasheed gave a thorough overview of the 2007 budget, compared the current budget to the 2006 budget, discussed the PC's oversight role in the budget execution process, and answered questions.

[1](#)3. (SBU) Sheikh Rasheed concluded the press conference by calling the press "the power of truth" and encouraging them to attend PC meetings and other legislative committee meetings. The Governor and Deputy Governor plan to hold a second press conference about the budget execution process later in the week.

COMMENT

[1](#)4. (SBU) This was the first press conference the Salah ad Din Provincial Council has sponsored and marks a significant change in the way Sheikh Rasheed and other PC members view the media. Previously, the media had been barred from attending PC meetings and arbitrarily banned from reporting on certain topics. The PC's pride in passing a professional provincial budget is proving to have a multiplying effect in many governance areas: improving relations with the media, a renewed desire to ensure proper checks and balances in project contracting, and a vision for automating the provincial accounting records. END COMMENT.

[1](#)5. (U) For additional reporting from PRT Tikrit, Salah ad Din, please see our SIPRNET Reporting Blog:
<http://www.intelink.sgov.gov/wiki/Tikrit>.

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